

http://www.nydailynews.com/latino/2009/04/13/2009-04-13_cuba_keeps_out_us_religious_freedom_group_.html

WASHINGTON — A planned trip to Cuba this week by a U.S. religious freedom watchdog group has been canceled after the Cuban government did not issue visas to the delegation, the group said Monday, even as the Obama administration moved to ease sanctions on the communist nation.

The **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom** said it had been forced to call off the fact-finding visit that had been scheduled to run from Tuesday to Thursday due to the lack of visas. It said the visas had been applied for weeks earlier and it had received no explanation for why they were not granted.

“We are very disappointed by the Cuban government's refusal to allow an official U.S. delegation to investigate first-hand Cuban citizens' freedom to believe and practice their faith on the island,” **said commission chair Felice Gaer**, noting that countries like China, Vietnam, Laos, Saudi Arabia had allowed visits.